training they need to make the job as safe as possible. As a team, we need to work to ensure that basic and applied fire research are available to meet our fire management needs. If we do a good job of enlisting the public's cooperation in fire prevention and fuels management, it will help us meet the future goals of reduced losses due to catastrophic fires. This in turn will pay off by minimizing exposure of firefighters to the hazards involved in structure protection. This goal, then, requires the implementation of a well-focused fire prevention campaign coupled with the rapid deployment capability of our professionally trained firefighting forces.

As the Forest Service looks to the future for changing technology that will meet the complex challenge of our fire management capabilities, we also look to our changing workforce to meet the challenge of getting the job done. It's the grassroots effort of a culturally diverse workforce that strengthens the Forest Service's ability to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse public we serve. Our appreciation for our individual and cultural differences, as well as our similarities, fosters a work environment that is healthy, honest, and encourages full participation of everyone. Diversity is the new fiber that binds and reinforces our strength at all levels throughout the entire agency—from Ranger Districts to Regional Headquarters, in the field as well as in the office environment. America started off with diversity, and that's what makes us strong.

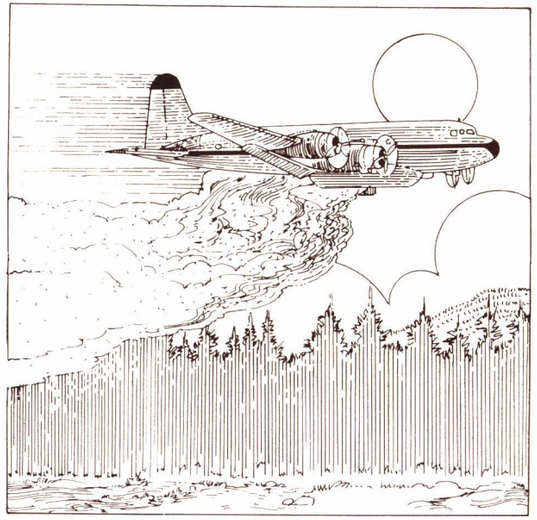
Looking to the 90's

Fire management has been one of the cornerstones for Forest Service tradition and natural resource management. As we look to the 1990's, our goal is to continue to fulfill that role in new ways for a changing Nation in a changing world. We know that the needs of society are changing, and we seek to be responsive to them. We know, too, that to be successful, no organization can stand alone. Our commitment to strong partnerships will foster productivity and progress. As an organization, we must work together to make each day rewarding. By working together to meet our common goals, we can ensure that the 1990's will provide many opportunities and exciting challenges to carry on the Forest Service tradition of excellence in fire management!

December 1989

91 3536 Department of Agriculture
...rvice
FS-444
SD
11
.A1A42
No 444
444

Fire Management in the 1990's



Those of us who work in fire management know that it is a fundamental part of our past. Fire management is woven into the fabric of Forest Service history. Our tie to the past helps us to look at our strengths and build on them for the future. As we look to the future, we can see that meeting the challenges of tomorrow means we need to develop our direction today. Our main source of strength and support includes a focus on those we serve—our publics, our partnerships, and each other.

This brochure is intended to provide a vision of the future—a sense of direction for the fire management community. It will also inform others who are interested in and concerned about fire management as to how we view the future and what we need to do to respond to the coming challenges and opportunities.

Serving the American People

We need to look ahead at the general trends in society that will affect Forest Service fire management activities. For instance, in the years ahead we can expect to serve a larger, more diverse, and older American citizenry. People will have expectations of what our shrinking forest resources can provide. Emphasis will be placed on increased recreational opportunities and the quality of the forest environment. Americans are becoming increasingly interested in land management issues, and this, of course, includes how fire is handled on their national forests. As they express concerns about increased urbanization, continued buildup of hazardous fuels, and the effects of fire on the environment, they will still be looking to us for leadership. As public interest and conditions change, we will need to maintain a posture of responsive flexibility. This will enable us to face new priorities and meet exciting challenges.

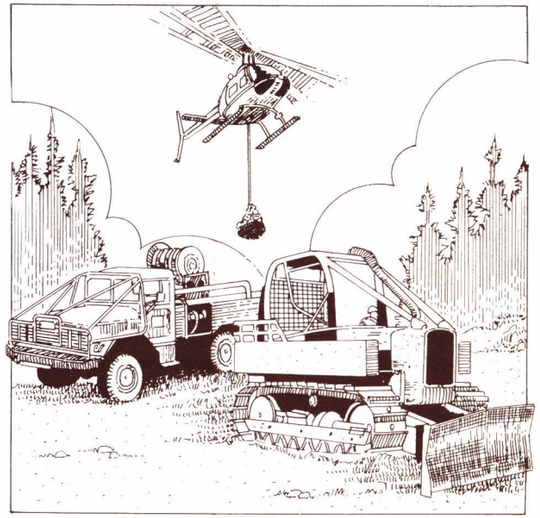
In the future, fire management will become an even more highly visible and socially important activity. Current issues and their solutions will be more complex. Urban-wildland interface, for example, has recently emerged as an important fire management issue on National Forest land. People building their homes in wildlands will affect our work because the potential for life-threatening wildland fires will also be on the increase. Wildland dwellers will want to be more involved in our fire management planning and will look to us for protection from devastating fires.

By integrating public involvement in our decision-making and performing our job with a high degree of

professionalism, we will enlist the broad-based confidence and support that is so vital to our success. By working together, we can respond to the concerns of our public and, at the same time, help them understand the importance of fire in the ecosystem and the increasing need for sound fire management.

Working in Partnerships

Our success in serving the American people is becoming increasingly contingent on our ability to form strong and trusting partnerships. Many of the concerns people have are of a worldwide nature. Our future partnerships, then, must include a perspective on



global concerns as well as a strong focus on local needs. We and our partners, including those on the international scene, will be more interdependent as we work to solve problems. We can expect other nations to seek partnership opportunities with American fire services, and this includes the Forest Service fire management team.

In the future, we will be challenged to expand our opportunities by responding to worldwide requests for disaster relief and technical assistance. On the national front, the Forest Service will be working with State fire agencies to strengthen fire protection forces. By teaming up on the homefront with these forces, we will be able to respond to the expanding needs of those who move to the wildlands. We will be expected to handle the full scope of interagency requests at home as well as special assignments on the international scene. This will challenge us, but at the same time it will deepen our knowledge, broaden our perspective, and make us even stronger.

By working together with mutual understanding between agencies and the public, we will be able to make well-informed policy and management decisions that are based on sound scientific principles that place long-term environmental quality at the forefront of resource management. Dynamic partnerships at the local, national, and international level encourage recognition, appreciation, and accommodation of differences between partners so that we can learn to work together better. This idea of partnership has its roots on every national forest where our employees are thinking and working in creative new ways.

Preparing Ourselves

The strength we need to serve the American people and gain their support can only come from us. We are the Forest Service, and by providing each other with respect, meaningful work, and involvement in our mutual decisions, we can create the nurturing atmosphere that will unite and prepare us to meet the challenge of the future. Although our jobs in fire management are unique, the land management principles with which we

deal involve all Forest Service employees. Protection of our Nation's natural resources requires the participation of our entire workforce interacting with each other and working together as a team.

Our firefighters will be working in a more hazardous environment, and we must ensure that they get the